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## THE ALPINE ACCIDENTS OF 1888.

TAKING into account the fact that the fall of snow in the Alps during the winter of 1887-88, and especially during the months of January and February 1888, was the heaviest that can be remembered for many years—a circumstance which boded ill for mountaineering in the ensuing summer—the number of accidents in the high Alps during the past season must be considered small. It certainly did not reach the appalling frequency of fatal disasters that marked the previous year, when twenty persons met their deaths, either through their own foolhardiness or by misadventure.

The death-roll of the past season includes ten persons. Strangely enough, the first fatal accident took place in the Salzburg Alps, where excursions are looked upon as not at all perilous, but which nevertheless contain hidden dangers, as the accident in August 1887 proved. On that occasion a young student, a practised mountaineer, lost his life in a snowstorm. Again, the accident by which Herr Josef Zulehner, a merchant of Salzburg, was killed occurred as early as May 1, 1888. That gentleman and his eldest son left Salzburg on that day by the local railway for Drachenfels. Thence the two, both experienced climbers, started for the Bachkaser, considered perfectly free from danger. This time, however, the upper portion of the path was found impassable, owing to its being blocked by trunks of trees and rocks, brought down by avalanches. Herr Zulehner now went in search of another path, to the so-called 'Jägerhaus,' but lost his way, and finally reached, after much heavy work, a mountain top. When descending thence towards the Russboden, father and son arrived at a series of precipitous rocks. Herr Zulehner, junior, descended a small rock only about seven feet high, and rested his alpenstock against it, to facilitate the descent of his father. The latter put his foot on it, using it as a kind of step, slipped, lost his hold, and fell, dragging his son with him in his fall. Both rolled down a

steep slope for some distance. The son, who had hurt both his arms, rose, and noticed with horror that his father was bleeding from an ugly wound in his head, and unconscious. He dressed the wound as best he could, to stop the bleeding, and ran for assistance as fast as his own injuries permitted him; but when help arrived, Herr Zulehner had been dead some time.

While this fatality was entirely of the nature of an accident, the same cannot be said of the next fatal mishap, on July 25, which occurred also in the Salzburg Alps or Salzkammergut (on the Dachstein, near Gmunden), and by which two lives were sacrificed. A party of three tourists from Judenburg had successfully ascended the mountain without guides; but in descending a perpendicular ice-wall thirty-three feet high, the foremost, Dr Zeitlinger, lost his footing, and dragged one of his companions, Herr H. Thannheiser, with him. Dr Zeitlinger was killed on the spot; and Herr Thannheiser expired while being removed to a place of shelter. The third of the party, Herr L. Thannheiser, escaped with his life. The ascent and descent of the Dachstein are described as free from danger, but under no circumstances should they be undertaken without local guides. Dr Zeitlinger was an experienced mountaineer, although not a member of the Austrian Alpine Club.

The Dent du Midi (ten thousand four hundred and fifty feet) is a most formidable mountain when covered with snow, as it was in the past season, but otherwise not especially difficult. A splendid view is obtained from it of Mont Blanc and the Alps of Valais, Dauphiné, and Piedmont. This mountain exacted last year two victims, one of which was an Englishman. On August 11, two tourists, Messrs Ball, fell over a precipice while descending from the Dent du Midi; one being killed, and the survivor, Mr Frank Ball, seriously injured. Two different accounts have been received of the cause of the accident. According to one report, having safely reached the summit, in returning, instead of descending to Champéry, whence the ascent was made, the travellers decided

to come down the mountain on the Vernayaz side, into the Salvan Pass, one of the three principal passes from the Rhone Valley to Chamonix. The guide refused to accompany them, for what reasons has not been learned; but whatever these reasons were, the tourists ought to have given in to his better judgment. They elected to go alone, and the result was a disaster. Another account states that there was nothing rash in the course which Messrs Ball took, and that the accident, resulting from recent snow concealing ice-covered rocks, was one which could have occurred even to an experienced guide. Moreover, both tourists had had experience in Alpine climbing, and Mr Frank Ball is a member of the Alpine Club, and has been familiar with mountain-work under its various aspects. This only goes to prove that even experienced men ought to subordinate their judgment to the discretion of professional guides.

This accident was rapidly followed by one on August 13, when a young German, Herr Pietri, only eighteen years of age, fell over a precipice and was killed. In this case, unpardonable negligence was the cause. The party, of which the unfortunate victim was one, consisted of five persons from Montreux. They were quite unprepared for the expedition, having no guide, no ice-axes, and no ropes. They made a successful ascent, however; but in returning, the foremost of the party slipped down the smooth frozen surface of a steep snow-field over a precipice. If the party had been roped, the accident would in all probability not have happened.

On August 16, a young student of München, Herr Georg Winkler, attempted to ascend the Weisshorn, canton of Valais, without a guide, and in the face of strong remonstrances, and since that time nothing has been heard of him. His body will probably never be discovered, for it has been ascertained that the young man, only eighteen years of age, in ascending was overtaken by an avalanche, thrown down, and buried. The way he had taken could be traced to nearly the top of the Weisshorn, where the avalanche crossed his path. About the same time, a fatal accident happened on the Chamossaire, above Aigle, on the road to the Ormonts, the victim being the only son of parents residing in the neighbourhood, who was out on the mountains searching for *edelweiss*.

On August 20, a sad accident, resulting in the death of Michael Innerkofler, one of the best guides known in the district, occurred on the glacier of Monte Cristallo, Southern Tyrol. He had ascended the mountain from the Schludersbach with two German tourists in safety, and the descent was successfully made as far as the Cristallo glacier, when, in crossing a bridge of ice spanning a wide crevasse, it gave way, and the three, roped together, fell. If it had not been for the bravery of the guide Mansueti Barbaria, and two of his fellow-guides who had taken another party up the mountain, and who witnessed the accident, probably all three would have perished. But, owing to the rapidity with which he rendered succour, the two tourists were saved. Poor Innerkofler, however, was past help, and he succumbed to the dreadful injuries he had received in his fall down the crevasse. The faulty

and unbusiness-like way in which roping together is done by the Tyrolese guides, however brave the latter may be, is considered the cause of the death of one of the best of them.

The disappearance of Mr Rudd, an Englishman, who was a resident at Obermais, near Meran, Tyrol, is also probably due to an accident. Mr Rudd, on September 13, started alone on an expedition to Ala. The last trace of him was found at Bedole, where he stayed for the night, and in departing stated that he would go over the Presena Pass and the Mandron Glacier to Ponte di Legno. As the passes over the glacier are very dangerous, and Mr Rudd went without a guide, it is supposed that he met his death there. Six guides were despatched by the family to search for the missing gentleman; but no traces were found of him.

On October 5, the body of a tourist in an advanced state of decomposition was found at the foot of the Cima della Pala. The description of the body agrees with that of a traveller who entered his name in a hostelry at Landro as Reinhold, of Vienna. Herr Reinhold stayed for about a fortnight at Landro, and always undertook his excursions in the Ampeza and Sexten dolomites, even the most difficult, without a guide. He stayed away for days in his excursions, and thus his long absence on what proved to be his last expedition, to the Cima della Pala, was taken no notice of. It appears that the tourist slipped in descending from the mountain, sustaining injuries which rendered him unconscious, and that he was frozen to death in that state. This was the last fatal accident of the season.

It will be observed that most of the accidents were due to the fact that the tourists, from unexplained motives, undertook perilous expeditions without guides or without being properly equipped. Nearly all of them, however, had had experience in mountaineering, and this is rather a good feature, seeing that there are persons who undertake ascents for which they are not qualified by previous work, and in others are prompted to make them by motives of vanity. What will be thought, for instance, of the gentleman who dragged a young girl, aged thirteen, up to the summit of Mont Blanc, merely for the sake of making a display? If report is true, the young lady was so fatigued on returning that she had to be carried down part of the way. This is an abuse of a healthy exercise, which ought to be deprecated by all persons whose sense of propriety is not blurred by a love of *éclat*. The ascent of Mont Blanc, undertaken in October by M. Janssen, the President of the French Academy of Sciences, was quite another matter. And he only went as far as the Grands Mulets, and in the interest of science, to make some scientific observations in that elevated altitude. He stayed at the hut of the Grands Mulets three days and four nights, the thermometer registering twelve degrees of frost. He was accompanied by a large party of guides, as well as by his daughter, who probably attended from a sense of filial piety towards an aged father. The descent was made in a kind of sledge of M. Janssen's own invention, constructed of sheepskins, and which, we trust, the lady shared with her esteemed parent.

The total number of fatal Alpine accidents proper amounted in 1888 to ten, against twenty

in 1887, as already mentioned. The number of deaths in the latter year was swelled by the terrible Jungfrau disaster, in which six mountaineers in full manhood lost their lives owing to misadventure. It is sad to think that the death-record for last year should have been increased by a fatality in that other and grander alpine field, the Caucasus, to which four proved mountaineers have fallen victims. Although, strictly speaking, outside the range of the country with which we have been dealing, it is deserving of a brief reference here. From the official account which has been published of the Caucasus disaster, we learn that Mr Donkin and Mr Fox, accompanied by the two Swiss guides Streich and Fischer, arrived at the beginning of August at the village of Urusby, at the foot of Elburz, whence they proceeded to Bezingui. The party set out on August 15 for the glaciers of Bezingui, in order to reach the Kachkan Tau. The interpreter and a native guide were sent to Balarica, where they were to await the return of the party, with orders to send horses and provisions to the refuge established at the foot of Mount Dykhtan, about twenty miles from Balarica, and not far from the Schari Pass, which leads into the province of Koutais. These orders were carried out; but the party not returning, the authorities were informed of the prolonged absence of the travellers, and search-parties were then sent out. Traces of the travellers were found as far as the summit of Kachkan Tau, seventeen thousand and ninety-six feet. At different points, near large crevasses, pieces of boots and axe marks were discovered, the travellers having, in the opinion of the natives, chosen the most perilous paths. It is supposed that the travellers either were buried in an avalanche or fell into a crevasse. Owing to the advanced season, no further investigations could be made.

## JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

## CHAPTER VIII.

IN the course of a month or two, John being by this time regarded as hopelessly intractable, Uncle Robert began to see that Fortune looked upon him with a smiling face. Nobody accused him, nobody blamed him, nobody suspected him of desiring to do anything but his duty by the pitiable and worthless creature left to his control. It was generally known that the boy was 'soft,' that is to say that he was almost but not quite an idiot. The bullying, mocking, pitying régime had brought him to that pass in so short a space of time.

To tell the truth, this rapid realisation of his hopes removed all sense of criminality from Uncle Robert's mind. There had never been any very oppressive sense of his own wickedness there—as, indeed, how should there be, when John's position and his own had been so evidently in need of rectification? He felt such a claim upon the property on the grounds of justice and common-sense, that any measure which transferred it to his own hands looked right and reasonable—almost. And the thing being so easily done, looked as if it must have happened in any case. He sturdily refused to believe that

he had hastened the catastrophe; and that amazing inward effrontery which everybody has, more or less, enabled him to tell himself that he had never meant to hasten it, or taken anything but common-sense means against it.

If there was anything which disturbed his felicity, it was the reflection that John would be a burden upon the estate; but he comforted himself with the reflection that the charges would be but small. He knew a case where a well-to-do father had left his estate in equal parts to his twin sons. One of them had grown up with a weak intellect; and the other boarded him at a farmhouse and paid a hundred a year for his maintenance; whilst he himself lived in a big house and kept his servants and carriages. Nobody thought the worse of this gentleman, and it was certain that the unfortunate brother had as much as he wanted or knew how to enjoy.

Before the body of John Vale the elder had lain three months in the ground, John Vale the younger was the unresisting fag and butt of half his schoolfellows, and Mr Macfarlane's tool of mental culture was more employed upon his wretched little body than upon that of any other two of the little crowd subjected to his tyrannies. But he had one friend whom his feebleness could not alienate, and who stuck to him the closer because of the ills that fell upon him. Master William Gregg fought his battles, and accepted the responsibility for many an act of helpless mischief, and did his lessons until it became quite useless to do them any longer, and generally played his part of protector with a bulldog fidelity natural to him. It became so certain that any boy who wanted to bully John had first of all to walk over the prostrate body of Master Gregg, and that youth was so difficult to walk over, and would be to-morrow so completely oblivious of to-day's defeat, that out of school-hours the forlorn innocent was at last left alone. In the days of health, he had been the brightest and cleverest lad in the school, full of courage, gaiety, high spirits, and mild dreams. He could jump farther in those days, and run faster, and learn his lessons with less effort than any one of them, and to the bulldog Gregg he had been a sort of Admirable Crichton. Everybody has seen and known these ungrudging romantic admirations and friendships amongst boys. John's fall from glory only made William Gregg the more loyal to him; and William went on his way in life in pretty constant heart-burning, because of the ill-usage his chum suffered. His days and nights were filled with dreams of the time when he would be as big as Macfarlane, and would be in a position to revenge himself for all the purposeless thrashings John now took at his hands. You cannot expect to have all the bulldog virtues and to escape all the bulldog shortcomings. Master Gregg was fully assured that as soon as he saw the remotest chance of repaying the schoolmaster, he should do it, and he hoarded up capital of wrath and added compound interest at such a rate as was warranted by no rules of arithmetic into which Macfarlane had yet inducted him.

The explosion came before he had meant it to come, for on a certain brightly showery day in April, the schoolmaster was in more than common form, and had John out three times. On the first occasion, Master Gregg's sense of

compound interest was worked at the usual extravagant rate, but no more; on the second, it assumed proportions which would have appalled the greediest of usurers; and on the third there were no figures to express it.

'Walk this way, Vale,' said Macfarlane, with an air of resigned fatigue, bent upon duty. 'I had hoped that the day's warning would have been sufficient, and that you would have been induced to prosecute your studies with some slight willingness and attention. I observe with regret that it is not so, and that I must repeat the lesson.' All this was wasted on the hapless John, who did not even know that the magistral voice was addressed to him, or what it said. 'Vale!' roared the bully, glad of the opportunity for flying into a passion, which this indifference gave him. He loved a rage, for it was the only outlet he knew from the tedious routine of his life. Nothing else lighted his blood to fervour, or quickened his heart-beats, or in any way fanned the ashes of his inward fires. 'Come here, sir!' He smote the desk with his cane so fiercely that every boy winced and winked.

The wretched John lifted his dull pale face with the grime of tears all over it, and arose. Young Gregg rose also, with a face even paler. He held in one hand a ruler, and with the other he fished a leaden inkstand from its hole in the desk before him, and stood with the ink dripping from his fingers. His heart beat with such monstrous thumps that every pulse shook him from head to foot, and his voice quaked as he spoke: 'Stop where you are, Jack.'

Only that New Englander of Lowell's who figured to himself a potato 'all on end at being boiled' could find a figure to do justice to the schoolmaster's amazement. It positively took his breath away. The boys looked on in wonder and wild awe, as at some dread cataclysm in nature. Gregg and the schoolmaster looked at each other in silence.

'Vale,' said Macfarlane, 'I will attend to you later on. Stay where you are.—Come here, Gregg.'

Gregg, with the dripping inkstand in one hand and the ruler in the other, stepped backward over the form, and walked slowly into the open space between the front desk and the fire-grate.

'Put those things down,' said Macfarlane. The boy shook his bulldog head and kept his glittering wicked eye upon the schoolmaster's, but said nothing.

There was a dreadful combat, but it was all unequal. So long as there was an ounce of fight left in him, the bulldog fought, and so long as Macfarlane could thrash he thrashed. In such a battle, blows fell anywhere, and the boy's face was wealed and streaked with blood when it was over.

The schoolmaster retired, leaving further discipline in the hands of the usher. Master Gregg, gathering himself together, walked to the desk and helped himself to water from the master's carafe and tumbler. He was white, except for the flushed and swollen streaks on his face, and trembled so much that he rattled the glass and water-bottle together noisily and spilled a good deal of the water when he drank. He propped himself against the desk, and from time to time drew the body of his hand gingerly across his

face and then looked at the blood upon it. The usher was awe-struck, and hardly dared to take notice of him. He was a young man of constitutional timidity, and was not overfed. The boy's dogged ferocity and quiet had frightened him, and perhaps in his heart he was not altogether on the tyrant's side.

An hour went by before Macfarlane came back. He had been busy in the interval with diachylon plaster, vinegar, and brown paper, and other such mild curatives for abrasions. Master Gregg looked at him as he entered; but the schoolmaster went by him without notice and took his customary seat, but with something more than his customary care.

'Boys,' he said, 'you have seen the punishment which is inflicted upon insubordination. You have witnessed an attempt to violate and set at nought the salutary and necessary discipline of the school. It is now my duty to show you that nothing can subvert that discipline or overthrow it.—Vale, come here!'

'Stop where you are, Jack,' said the dogged chum. If anything, the awe and amazement that fell upon the listeners transcended the first shock. Somehow, Master Gregg had provided himself with another ruler. He spat upon his hand and clutched it, workmanlike, twisting it until he had a firm hold upon it, and he looked so very unconquered that Macfarlane was more than half afraid of him.

'This has all to be gone through again, Gregg, has it?' he asked with an attempt at humour which sat rather uneasily upon his face and rang rather false in his voice.

'Seems so,' said Gregg, with an accent which sounded a hundredfold more daring and insolent for being purely commonplace. 'I shan't stand by and see him licked. He can't learn his lessons, and you know he can't learn 'em. It's no use licking him,' he concluded in an almost argumentative tone.

'I should have thought, Gregg,' said the schoolmaster, 'that your lesson would have sufficed you.'—Gregg shook his head with perfect solemnity.—'Do you presume to imagine that you will be allowed to dictate the discipline of the school?'—Gregg shook his head again.—'If I am compelled again to administer chastisement, I shall not spare you, Gregg; but I am not disposed at present to inflict further punishment if I can avoid it. Go to your seat, sir.'—A third time Gregg shook his head.

'You won't lick Vale again, sir,' he said, as if he had made up his mind upon the question.

Macfarlane, for the first time in his life, concluded reluctantly that nothing but bamboo would meet the case. There was another battle, which ended as the first had done, and ended sooner. Master Gregg's nerves had broken down, and he was sobbing and weeping at the end of this encounter; but when Vale was called again, he got to his feet and spluttered, 'Stop where you are, Jack,' with as wilful a determination as ever.

'Mr Johnson,' said Macfarlane, addressing his assistant, 'I shall be obliged to you if you will make a personal visit to Gregg's father and inform him that I have been compelled to expel Gregg from the school.'

The usher whispered that the hour for the



dismissal of the school had passed, and the school-master welcomed the intelligence.

'You may go, boys,' he said.—'I will deal with you to-morrow, Vale.' And with that he withdrew.

Master Gregg got home with difficulty, and found that the usher had been there before him. Gregg, senior, who was all for the sustenance of authority, conceived it to be his duty to horse-whip William, and did it—thereby setting more machinery in motion than he dreamt of; for if it had not been for this supplementary flogging, Uncle Robert's delightfully simple plan would in all probability have prospered, and such starved root of wit as lived in young John's brains would have perished altogether.

When William had digested his flogging, he was allowed to take his supper and retire to rest without much further notice. The first thing he did on reaching his bedroom was to lock himself in, and being thus safe from observation or intrusion, he set to work to pack up sundry simple necessities, which he tied together in a handkerchief. Next, from the bottom of a small wooden trunk which belonged to him he extracted a glazed earthen money-pot, which gave forth a heavy muffled noise as he shook it. After having vainly tried to coax the coins it held through the slit at the top by means of a straw, a folded leaf of his copy-book, and the end of a lucifer-match, he laid the earthen treasury upon the bed and there broke it with a tap of the poker, having previously laid his jacket over it to dull the sound of the blow. He gathered up the shards and hid them carefully beneath the fire-grate, pushing them as far out of sight as they would go. Next he counted his treasure, and made out three shillings and fourpence in coppers, and one shilling and sevenpence in threepenny and fourpenny pieces. From his trousers' pockets he drew such a variety of miscellaneous articles as boys love to carry, and amongst them a solitary penny piece, sticky with cobbler's wax and toffy. Having counted it over with extreme silence and caution several times, in the vain hope of making more than five shillings of it, he tied it all together in a strip of rag and put it under his pillow. Then he undressed and got into bed, and after some sore-sided tumbling and tossing, fell asleep.

It was pitch-dark when he awoke, but he was out of bed in an instant. He lit his candle and dressed with great quiet and expedition; and so with his bundle in one hand, his boots in the other, and his handful of money bulging out one of his pockets, he stole noiselessly downstairs. The clock ticked sternly at him, and the house-dog's cold nose thrust suddenly into his hand in the dark brought his heart into his mouth. The lock and the bolts of the door were rusty, and creaked dreadfully as he withdrew them; but though he listened with all his ears, he heard no sound of movement in the house. The night gaped at him, black, chill, and starless, when the door was open, and the widespread world looked cheerless enough. But he had made up rather an unusual mind for a boy of his years, and perhaps *had* rather an unusual mind for a boy of his years; and stifling any misgivings that may have assailed him, he slipped into the open air, closed the door behind him, and stole away.

He looked back once at the house he was leaving, and found suddenly that he had no rancour in his heart. But he turned round again to the bare world he had made up his mind to face, and trudged on in a growing darkness until he reached the Jacob's ladder and mounted to Scott's Hills. There he sat down upon a stile to wait for daylight—which proved a weary business. He dozed several times, and awoke, nipped to the bone by the chill air of early April; but at last, in spite of sore bones, and cold, and the loneliness which was worse than anything else or all other discomforts put together, he fell sound asleep again, until the morning sun shining full into his eyes awoke him.

He rose to his feet, shook himself, and pursued his way towards the town. Arrived there, he found the earliest inhabitants already leisurely taking down their shop-shutters, or sweeping out their shops or leaning on their brooms to exchange the slow-going news of the place across the street. He could not rid himself of a sense that everybody was aware of his intent, and that he was running away from home; and this feeling, if anybody had noticed him, might have given him a furtive look as he sped along the high street towards Robert Snelling's house.

Snelling's house stood three or four doors from a side-street which branched off from the main thoroughfare; and from this side-street branched off in turn a narrow blind alley, in which were situate a bakehouse, a wheelwright's workshop, a stable or two, and a granary. Doors opening off the alley led to the back-yards of dwelling-houses, and in one of them, as fate would have it, young Gregg saw the chum for whose sake he had suffered, languidly and dreamily blacking a pair of boots. It was part of Uncle Robert's household economy that the young should have this kind of office imposed upon them, and he had set John the task with all the greater willingness because the boy had never been accustomed to it, and it hurt his pride.

The runaway tried in vain to signal his companion by whistlings and rappings, and at length growing desperate, ventured within the yard and called him by name. At that John turned and came towards him.

'Come outside,' young Gregg whispered. 'Come with me.'

Young John obeyed unquestioningly; and when William began to run with a backward inviting glance and gesture, he followed. They ran up the by-street until they came to an open piece of waste land with three or four abandoned houses on it, deserted by some bankrupt contractor, and long since left to fall to ruin and decay.

'Where are you going, Will?' he asked then.

'I have run away from home,' Will answered. 'I am going to seek my fortune, if you'll come with me. Do come, Jack. What have you got to stay for? Macfarlane will give you a hiding if you go back to school. He'll always be doing it. You can't learn your lessons, Jack; it's no use trying. Will you come?'

John looked frightened, and hesitated.

'Come along,' the other urged him, taking him by the hand. He obeyed the impulse, and they set out together. 'I'll take care of you, Jack.'

The bulldog heart was as warm and tender and valiant as ever yet a heart was in the world. 'You cheer up, old chap; they shan't hurt you any more.'

### ON THE ARTIFICIAL PRODUCTION OF FIRE.

WHEN the pursuits of hunting and fishing or other causes led primitive man into the colder regions of the earth, the warmth of fire for bodily comfort, as well as for the preparation of food, must have been one of his first necessities, and the artificial production of it one of the earliest objects of his ambitious ingenuity. Modern savages in tropical and sub-tropical climates produce fire by the friction of dry and inflammable wood, rotated either by the hands or by a bow closely resembling that employed with a drill. Such a method of producing fire works very well in dry climates, where wood suitable for the purpose is abundant; but it is evident that it would not be so satisfactory in those countries where, with the exception of a small part of the year, dry wood is an object of considerable rarity. To a man in the early stages of civilisation, the accidental production of a spark of fire by the concussion of flints and iron-pyrites, or iron-stone, may have suggested such a means for the attainment of his desired object; and, it may be added, the occurrence of these two minerals together, as is often the case, gives great probability to such a theory. The kindling of a fire by means of dry grass was but one step further, and followed naturally upon the first discovery of the accidental spark. The substitution of flint and iron-stone for the friction of dry wood in the production of fire marks a decided step in the advancement of civilisation. The object was attained with less expenditure of time and labour than by the old method, although it was of course practicable only where flints and iron-stones were easily obtainable.

Man, as several writers have pointed out, is the only fire-making animal. Other animals have the skill to build houses for protection from the weather and from enemies; are swift in the chase, and, in point of strength, are in many cases superior to man. But this particular attribute of fire-producing belongs to man alone, and, were there no other mark of distinction between him and the brutes, this would of itself show him to belong to an order, in degree at least, pre-eminently above them.

Among the very earliest specimens of man's handiwork which have been preserved for our examination—namely, chipped and wrought flints—there are to be found many that bear in the character of their shapes and external markings the clearest possible evidences of having once served as 'strike-a-lights'; and in some cases the actual fragments of iron-pyrites with which they were used have been found in close proximity to them, thus indicating with a probability which almost amounts to certainty the original use to which they were applied. Among many thousands of palæolithic and neolithic flint implements which we have had the opportunity of

closely examining, were a great many forms which there is no hesitation in saying belong to this class. Many of the forms which sometimes have been regarded as 'scrapers' of a rough and uneven type are nothing more than flints which have been so used. The essential quality of such a flint was that it should be capable of throwing off small splinters when brought in sharp contact with a mass of iron-pyrites. The scraper-like form of flint was particularly suited for such a purpose, presenting a tolerably acute angle to the object upon which it was impinged. Several specimens in our collection—gathered chiefly from West Kent—bear indentations which have resulted probably from having been used with thin flakes or strips of iron-stone, such, for instance, as are very abundant in the greensand of Sevenoaks and the surrounding district. As such fragments are occasionally found among the tertiary deposits in and around West Wickham, there is good reason to suppose that such means were used for striking a light, although we are bound to say we have not yet succeeded in finding any particular piece of iron-stone which looks as if it had been used for such a purpose.

The ancient inhabitants of the East were familiar with the use of magnifying glasses and reflectors for producing fire from the sun's rays, and there are in the writings of classical authors numerous allusions to such customs; but there is no reason to suppose that such means were ever largely used in England. The frequent absence of bright sunshine would often render any such attempt to obtain fire wholly ineffectual.

For many centuries the tinder-box, or something closely analogous, must have been the only means by which fire was artificially produced in England. The writer possesses an old tinder-box which had been used for many years, but of course since the introduction of matches it has been cast away as mere lumber. As an original specimen of the common type of those indispensable accessories of domestic life during many centuries, it is of considerable antiquarian interest, although it is of no intrinsic value whatever. It is a circular box of tin, four inches in diameter, and an inch and a half in height. It originally possessed a lid, which was probably furnished with a socket for the candle, by means of which the flame developed from the spark on the tinder was preserved; but unfortunately the lid is lost. The steel, shaped to fit the hand, upon which the flint was struck to produce the spark, and flat plate of tin, designed to extinguish the smouldering tinder which the spark had ignited, both remain, and the steel bears marks of long-continued wear. A fragment of flint, too, which is in all likelihood that used for producing the sparks, has been considerably chipped and bruised by repeated contact with the steel; and it is interesting on that account, as showing what really is the effect of such wear. Upon comparison, we find that there is no important difference between this flint and those which we have described as having been found in conjunction with neolithic implements. On the contrary, it bears a strong resemblance to them; and what few variations there are, are only such as would necessarily arise from the variation in the time which has elapsed since the flints were chipped and broken. Some

of the tinder remains in the box, and we have often succeeded in producing a light from it by striking the steel, held firmly in the left hand, with the flint in the right, the blow being directed towards the tinder-box. When the small spark of red fire generated by the minute chip of flint appears, it is necessary to fan or blow gently upon it until it has grown to a small patch of fire. Then, upon the application of a thin strip or splint of wood, previously tipped with sulphur, the desired flame is produced, and the tinder in the box may be extinguished by simply putting on the lid. The whole process, after practice, occupies less than half a minute; but if the tinder be not perfectly dry, perhaps five or ten minutes may be required to produce a light. Tinder is made by burning old cotton rags, and extinguishing them before they are completely consumed by the fire. Other kinds of tinder are made from dried fungus. It seems almost incredible that, with the knowledge of chemistry which was possessed during the last two or three centuries, such a clumsy and difficult method of producing fire should not have been superseded by one more easy and expeditious.

The invention of 'lucifer matches' in 1827 marks the commencement of a very important era in the history of our subject. Before that date, it is true there had been certain chemical means used by which a light was produced, but they were merely exceptional cases. Friction matches were invented by Mr John Walker, of Stockton-on-Tees, in 1827. For many years he occupied a small shop, No. 59 High Street, where he carried on the business of an apothecary. He appears to have been a tolerable chemist; and, being interested in studying the properties of phosphorus, it is probable he discovered its suitability for the production of light in the course of his researches. For several years he sold the matches he made in pasteboard boxes containing fifty matches for one shilling per box. By this lucrative business he saved enough money to retire; and on the 1st of May 1859 he died at the age of seventy-eight years. A letter relating to Mr Walker's valuable invention has been contributed to the *Northern Echo* by Mr Alderman Jackson. It is so interesting that we shall make no apology for reproducing it here:

SIR—I have not the slightest doubt that the invention of lucifer matches is due to our late fellow-townsmen, Mr John Walker, chemist and druggist, who had for his place of business the shop No. 59 High Street, Stockton. I knew Mr Walker personally and intimately, and have had many a friendly chat with him both on this subject and others. In the year 1860 I sent a communication to the *Illustrated London News*, in consequence of an article in that journal with the heading, 'The Origin or Invention of Lucifer Matches.' After alluding to the tinder-box and phosphorus match-boxes, it is stated: 'Suddenly and successfully, but where we have not been able to learn, the lucifer matches invaded the province of the old tar matches.' Before replying to the article in the *Illustrated London News*, I communicated with an old friend, the editor of a local newspaper, who confirmed my conviction that the world at large is indebted to Mr John Walker for this very useful

invention. I may say that Mr Walker was frequently and urgently pressed by his numerous friends to take out a patent; but he always declined, saying it was not worth the while doing so, considering the simple and trifling nature of the article. Mr Walker died in Stockton in the year 1859. The facts as stated in the local paper to which I refer were published in 1852, and were as follows: 'Mr Walker was preparing some lighting mixture for his own use, when a match, after being dipped in the preparation, took fire by accidental friction upon the hearth. This was the first friction match, and the hint was not lost. He commenced making friction matches, selling with each box a piece of doubled sand-paper to set them in flames by pressure of the thumb and a sharp pull. It was in the month of August 1827 that he began the sale, and his first customer was the late Mr John Hixon, solicitor, of Stockton. Harrison Burn was employed to make the matches; and the boxes were made by Mr John Ellis, at three-halfpence each, the price of a box containing fifty being one shilling.' I think, after perusing the above, you will have no doubt that Mr Walker is really the inventor of this useful and now indispensable article. I have always endeavoured, in various parts of the Continent, as well as in England, to establish these facts, that justice may be done to the departed.—I am, sir, very respectfully,

RICHARD JACKSON.

STOCKTON-ON-TEES, May 6, 1871.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the great improvements which have been made in matches since Walker's time. They can now be produced so cheaply that, we are informed, boxes of safety matches well made and neatly packed can be obtained for elevenpence per gross.

## THE WESTERFIELD SCARE.

BY T. W. SPEIGHT.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

I HAVE been so often asked to tell the following story in the course of the forty years which have come and gone since the events narrated in it took place, that at last I have made up my mind never to open my lips about it again, but just to write it down in my own homely fashion, so that if anybody bothers me to tell it in time to come, I can put it before them in black and white, and bid them read it for themselves, which will be a saving of time and trouble to every one concerned.

My name is Reuben Holditch, and I was born and brought up in the little town of Westerfield, in the north of England, where my father, my grandfather, and my great-grandfather, and, for aught I know to the contrary, a generation or two of ancestors still further back, had filled, with credit to themselves and satisfaction to the public, the office of sexton to the grand old abbey church of St Mary's.

The ancient and reputable post in question having been held by a Holditch for something like a hundred and fifty years, it was looked

upon, from the time I can remember anything, quite as a matter of course, and as one of those things which are not open to question, that my father's son should one day follow in the footsteps of his ancestors, and earn his daily bread after the same fashion in which they had earned theirs. How the knowledge came to me that such was the mode of life which an unkind fate had mapped out for me, I cannot now call to mind, but from the very first I looked forward to it with loathing and dismay. Many a time my father would make me stand by him while he scooped out a grave in the black loamy soil, with the view, I suppose, of teaching the young idea how to dig. He was very proud of his handiwork, and would bid me observe the artistic finish—only those weren't the words he used—of all the details; but sometimes his spade would throw up the skull or thigh-bone of some previous tenant of the space he was now getting ready for another, and then I would turn away, disgusted and sick at heart, while my father would laugh lightly and say: 'It's nowt, lad, nowt at all, when once a body gets used to it.' But whatever my secret thoughts and feelings might be on the question of my future, I said no word to any one about them, and certainly my father was the last person in the world to have any suspicion of the degeneracy of his only son.

My father eked out his livelihood by making and cobbling shoes, as his father and grandfather had done in their time, so that the lapstone might be said to be as much an inheritance of the Holditch family as the churchyard itself. I, however, had little more liking for the cobbler's awl than for the spade and pickaxe; my thoughts and wishes went out and clung to something very different from either.

From the time when I was quite a child I had a great fondness for flowers. I know not whence the liking came, nor why it came, but there it was. One day, when I was about twelve years old, I was sent by a neighbour with a message to the head-gardener at Penigarth, Sir William Verinder's country-house, about four miles away. To me, the poor sexton's son, the gardens and glass-houses at Penigarth came as a revelation of beauty undreamed of before. The gardener, a kindly old Scotchman, was evidently pleased with my enthusiasm, and was at the trouble to show me over the place, eliciting from me by the way sundry particulars of my history. 'Weel, laddie,' he said to me at parting, 'everybody to his likes; but for my part, I'd sooner tend my bit flowers than howk graves.' I need hardly say that I was entirely of the same way of thinking.

From that hour my heart was set on becoming a gardener. My father, for his position in life, gave me what was considered in those days a fairly good education; but with my fourteenth birthday my schooling came to an end. He was a reticent man, and had said no word to me of his intentions; but I foreboded only too surely what they were. I was to be apprenticed to a shoemaker in the town, in order that I might learn the business thoroughly, then, after I should be out of my time, and as years crept over my father, I was gradually to work into the position of assistant-sexton, with the view of ultimately succeeding to all the emoluments and dignities

which so many of my predecessors had enjoyed before me.

Hereupon ensued the only serious difference of opinion that ever divided my father and myself even for a day. I told him plainly how utterly hateful to me was the idea of becoming a shoemaker, and how my heart was set on being a gardener. He was 'struck all of a heap,' as the saying is, and said some hard things in the heat of his temper. For a week or more he remained in the 'dumps,' hardly speaking a dozen words to me all that time. Then came another explosion; and then, finding I was not to be moved from my purpose, he gave way all at once, and told me I might do as I liked. All this had reference only to the shoemaking; not for a moment did he dream that when the proper time should come, a Holditch could be other than a proud man at succeeding to what might with reason be called the family estate in the abbey churchyard, and I was careful not to undeceive him. One day I overheard him say to his particular crony, Peter Philp: 'After all, when one comes to consider, there isn't such a vast difference between a grave-digger and a gardener. They both get their living out o' the mould, and both have to be handy with their shovels. And who knows, if this new-fangled notion of planting folks' graves with flowers and shrubs comes into fashion, but what Rube may be doing a good thing for hisself by learning all about 'em.'

So, with a fast-beating heart, I went to Penigarth and asked for Mr Ayscough. The old Scotchman had not forgotten me; and a fortnight later, through his influence, I was offered the post of under-gardener's assistant at Linden Villa, the house of a rich merchant in the outskirts of Westerfield. There I stayed for two years, picking up every scrap of knowledge I could lay hold of, at the end of which time a berth was found for me at Penigarth itself. Here several years slipped away almost without my knowing how, so happy and full of content was my lot. Mr Ayscough, who took great interest in me, had advised me to learn at least the rudiments of Latin, without which, he said, no horticulturist could be said to know his business in these days; so a great portion of my spare hours were given to the acquisition of that grand but difficult language. Almost as a matter of course, I had fallen in love by this time. The object of my passion was pretty Mary Lidford, the only child of her mother, who was a widow. Mary had nothing of her own in the way of this world's gear, and as my wages only just sufficed to keep myself, there seemed little likelihood of our being able to marry for several years to come. But that was a prospect which did not trouble us greatly. We were young, we loved each other, and we could afford to wait till brighter days should dawn.

I was a few months turned one-and-twenty when a sad accident happened to my father: he fell and broke his leg. The fracture was a bad one; it would be weeks before he would be able to leave the house, months before he would be strong enough to go about his work as usual. I was sent for at once, and had not been more than a few hours at home when word was brought that my father's services were needed. A parishioner was dead, and his grave would have to be dug



the following day. In this emergency my father naturally turned to me; and when I hinted that, seeing how little I knew of such things, it might be advisable to call in the services of the sexton of St Michael's, he gave me a look I did not forget for many a day.

'There was never a Holditch born who couldn't dig a grave,' he said. 'It comes nat'rel to 'em.'

After that, of course there was nothing for it but to do as my father's son was expected to do.

If the affair had ended there, it would not have mattered greatly, but it could not. It was evident that my father would be disabled for a long time to come; he must either find a substitute, or give up his post; and to have had to do the latter would, I verily believe, have broken his heart. I was to be his successor—on that point everybody (but myself) was agreed, and everybody seemed to think I could do no other than act as his deputy at a time like the present.

Of course I had to tell Mr Ayscough how matters stood. 'There's no help for it, laddie,' he said. 'Thou must go and bide with thy father till he gets better, and we must try and get on without thee for a while as best we can.'

It was in October, when the days seem to shorten so fast and the lengthening nights are already full of the prophecy of the coming winter, that my father met with his accident. I had not been more than three days at home before I was told something—not by one person only, but by a dozen at the least—which surprised me greatly, and set me wondering what amount of truth there could be at the bottom of it.

What I was told was this: That of an evening after dark, especially on those nights when there was no moon, or when it did not rise till late, the town was infested by a creature which was said to be half-man and half-monkey in appearance—the 'man-ape' being the term applied to it by general acceptance. The account given of it by those who professed to have seen it varied in some of the details; but all agreed that its body was covered with long coarse hair, that its face resembled that of the ape tribe in general, that its footsteps were inaudible, that its activity was something marvellous, and finally, that on the two or three occasions on which certain bolder spirits than common had ventured to go in pursuit of it, it was seen to vault over the railings which crown the low wall that encloses the abbey churchyard, and disappear among the tombs and grave-stones inside. At first this strange creature seemed to confine its pranks to frightening women and elderly people. It seldom or never made its appearance before nine o'clock, by which hour nearly all the shops were shut and the streets comparatively deserted. Then would it spring suddenly out from some dark corner or covered entry—and in our old-fashioned town such 'entries' were to be found in every street—and encircling the neck of the passer-by, which, five times out of six, was that of a woman, with one of its dreadful hairy arms, it would give utterance to a shrill gibbering cry, which all who had heard it declared to be like nothing human, and then releasing its victim as suddenly as it had grasped her or him, it would beat its breast for a moment or two with one hand, and then bounding away, vanish in the darkness. Several of the women thus assailed fainted with fright, and

were ill for days after; while on old Miss Glendovy the effect was such that she became subject to fits of nervous trembling, which she was unable to control to the last day of her life. Nor did the men fare much better. Mr Pybus, the tailor, was so scared that he took to his bed, and was not seen in his shop for a week to come; while Mr Wakeling, the corn-chandler, the moment his tormentor released him, gave vent to a yell which brought half the people in the street to their doors and windows. Doveton, the butcher, who stood six feet one in his stockings, was so terrified one night that it was said he never went out after dark for weeks afterwards without being armed with one of his own formidable knives; while two of the town constables fared no better than ordinary mortals, but considerably worse in one respect, seeing that both of them had their hats knocked completely over their eyes by their all but unseen tormentor.

It is not too much to say that before long a scare set in the like of which had never been known in Westerfield. Hardly a female would venture out of doors after eight o'clock unless escorted by one of the opposite sex, and not a child was to be seen abroad after dusk. Even the members of the Apollo Club, a convivial gathering of well-to-do people who met on two evenings a week at the *King's Head* for the promotion of harmony and good-fellowship, were reported to be so far affected by the general scare that when they broke up a little before midnight they preferred wending their way homeward by twos or threes to running the risk of being pounced upon singly by an anomalous hairy being after a fashion which was enough to throw any elderly gentleman into a fit. All sorts of absurd stories and exaggerations got about, as must inevitably be the case whenever the 'thousand tongues of Rumour' are all set wagging at once. It was reported that sometimes the man-ape had a plaster in his hand, which he tried to fix over the mouths of his victims; some who professed to have seen him would have it that he was at the very least seven feet high; while others averred that he was deformed, and had a huge hump between his shoulders. Others of the more ignorant were firmly persuaded that there was a strong smell of brimstone about the creature, and that his eyes glowed in his head like live coals.

At length matters came to such a pass that a number of the bolder spirits among the young men of the town banded themselves together with the avowed intention of hunting down the man-ape. Dividing themselves into a couple of gangs, each member of which was armed with a stout cudgel, they perambulated the town night after night from eight o'clock till midnight, vowing vengeance the most dire on the object of their hatred—if only they could come across it. This, unfortunately, small as the town was, they never succeeded in doing. The creature seemed to derive a sort of malicious glee from setting them at defiance. Thus, on more than one occasion, the 'vigilance boys,' as they had dubbed themselves, on turning a corner would find a woman in a half-fainting state, who had been waylaid by the creature only a minute or two previously. It may be that the 'boys' were too much addicted to chaffing each other, to rattling their

sticks on the pavement, and to acting in too demonstrative a manner generally in the course of their perambulations, to render their services of any avail; but be that as it may, the outrages still went on as heretofore. Not that they occurred every night by any means; sometimes four or five nights would go by without anything being seen or heard of the creature; while, as before remarked, it seemed to have a rooted dislike to moonlight; then, for two or three nights together, its objectionable practices would be resumed. Westerfield was fairly at its wits' end with terror and rage.

So far the creature's pranks had seemed actuated by nothing worse than a spirit of mischief, such as might be supposed to be in accord with its ape-like attributes; but when one morning a rumour spread through the town that on the previous night Squire Dallison had not only been assailed in the usual way, but had, in addition, been robbed of his gold chronometer, his purse, and a valuable breast-pin, it was felt that matters were becoming serious indeed. Mr Dallison, who was returning home from a friend's house at the time, was so prostrated by the dastardly attack as to be unable to leave his room for a week to come. His first act was to offer a reward of twenty pounds for such information as should lead to the capture of his cowardly assailant.

A few nights later, three young men made sure they had secured the reward. They were returning together from a dancing party, and having goloshes over their shoes, they made scarcely any noise in walking. Turning a corner, they came full upon the creature, who was advancing from the opposite direction, and who instantly turned and fled. The young men were so startled that for a moment or two they lost their presence of mind, but five seconds later they were in full pursuit. They were all good runners, and the chase was an exciting one. The night was clear and starlit, the time was between eleven and twelve o'clock, and the streets were deserted. Presently the creature, with its pursuers some forty or fifty yards behind, emerged from the tangle of side streets among which the chase had begun, into the main street of the town, which led, almost in a direct line, to the abbey, some quarter of a mile away. It was apparently bent on escaping as it had escaped before, that is, by scaling the spiked railings of the churchyard and being lost among the wilderness of tombstones inside. The pursuers put on an extra spurt; but their quarry, as if aware of it, did the same. Suddenly, to the intense surprise of the young men, the creature turned sharply to the left and disappeared up a narrow covered way known as Cooper's Court. But this move was explained a moment or two later by the appearance of a couple of constables approaching from the opposite direction. Cooper's Court being a *cul-de-sac*, with houses on three sides of it, the young men now felt themselves as sure of capturing their prey as one may reasonably feel sure about anything. They shouted to the constables to hurry up, and rushed helter-skelter through the passage into the court. Then they paused to gather breath and look around. But what had become of the creature? Three pairs of keen eyes scanned every corner of the court,

but to no purpose. Then an exclamation broke from one of them; and the others, following the direction of his finger with their gaze, could just make out a dusky figure climbing ape-fashion up the iron water-spout which ran from the roof to the ground between two of the corner houses of the court. The creature was climbing slowly, hand over hand and foot over foot, and was already three parts of the way up. The young men were so struck that they could not utter a word. Half a minute later the creature had reached the roof of one of the houses; then it turned and relieved itself by giving vent to a gibbering derisive laugh, if laugh it could be called, and scrambling nimbly up the tiles of the roof, disappeared on the other side. By this the two constables had come up, and they, as a matter of course, took the direction of the affair into their own hands. But by the time they had succeeded in knocking up the people in one of the houses and in getting leave to go through into the garden at the back, the creature could easily have got away three or four times over.

#### A QUARTETTE OF THEATRICAL TRIUMPHS.

JOHN STUART MILL, in a very characteristic part of his writings, says: 'Success in life may be compared to what we see at every crossing in a large city. At the crossing, one man arrives just in time to pass to the other side before one or, it may be, more carriages block up the way; but another man equally as smart comes up a second later and has to wait till the roadway is cleared of the obstruction. The first of these men, it may be, has caught the train which shall carry him to the scene of some lucky business transaction; whilst the latter, through the delay, may have missed the best opportunity ever presented to him in life.' On such a simile it is quite possible for many minds to enlarge, or even criticise; but on the whole, Mill's illustration is a very true one, for it is the lesson of experience.

All professions fall within the circumference of Mill's illustration; but none lies so near the centre as the profession of an actor. The stage, as a rule, presents to its votaries more blanks than prizes; and yet the boards are always crowded with men and women eager to rival a Garrick or a Siddons. Whence arises this constant supply? The answer may be inferred from the following facts. The actor in the course of his profession meets his fellow-men face to face; the author may write, but the praise due to his merits comes to him second-hand. Not so with the actor, for *he* can feel the enthusiasm of applause, which is meted out to him by a delighted and admiring audience. Hence it is that so many from behind the footlights challenge the verdict of their fellows; and one chance of success is eagerly laid against a thousand chances of failure. Such is human nature.

Failure is a term of frequent occurrence in the annals of actors; and to those who know all the realities of stage-life, it is pitiful to see and to meet men who have clung to their 'profession' for a lifetime without making the least advancement. It is not our intention at present to speak

of these, but rather to recall some instances of great and marvellous success.

And first, there is Garrick, who made his début in Goodman's Field Theatre, London, in October 1741. A worse time could not have been chosen, for during the previous month an Act had been passed regulating stage-plays. The result of this Act was that many theatres were closed, and hundreds of men and women deprived of their occupation. Many plans, however, were tried for the purpose of evading the statute; and it was under the shelter of one of these subterfuges that Garrick commenced his professional career. On the 19th of October 1741, placards announced that a concert of vocal and instrumental music would be given in Goodman's Field Theatre. The music was to be divided into two parts, and between the parts a representation of *King Richard III.* was to be given by a gentleman who was to act for the first time. The statement was not altogether correct, for Garrick had once acted at Coventry. An average audience was gathered when the curtain rose. Garrick acted splendidly; and this was noted by two admirable actors and critics—Macklin and Smith. Next morning, the *Post* gave the young actor a glowing criticism, which tended to raise the public curiosity. Pope heard Garrick the second night, and pronounced him 'the first actor of the day.' Crowds flocked to Goodman's Field; the western places of amusement were neglected; and before the performance began, nobles, bishops, and legislators might have been seen struggling with each other for the empty seats. His first real venture was a success; he received thirty pounds a night, besides many benefits. But Garrick's triumphs do not end here. Pitt lauded him to the skies; and Murray, Halifax, Chesterfield, and Sandwich thought it an honour to count Garrick amongst the number of their friends. Fortune continued to smile upon him; and he continued acting till the year 1776. When he pronounced his 'farewell,' and made his final bow from the stage of Drury Lane on the 10th of June, there was not a dry eye in the theatre. The whole audience re-echoed the word 'farewell' which had fallen from the gifted actor's lips; and in this way ended a true dramatic scene—a scene only dramatic in the sense that it was touchingly real.

Six months previous to Garrick's 'farewell,' there appeared on the same boards another aspirant—Sarah Siddons. Her part was that of Portia, in the *Merchant of Venice*; and she failed. Her delicate and fragile form clothed in a faded dress did not captivate the audience. Sarah was the protégée of Garrick, who was greatly disappointed at his apt pupil's discomfiture, for nervousness had entirely overpowered her. But Garrick did not despair; and another chance was given to the young actress. This time she was to appear as Lady Anne in *Richard III.*; but in the love-scene she forgot the directions given her in the morning, and Garrick's look was so terrible at a certain part in the play that she fainted. Failure was now her reward; Melpomene was not propitious.

Seven years passed; and by the end of this time the provinces were ringing with the fame of Sarah Siddons. The proprietors of Drury Lane, on the strength of this new popularity,

re-engaged her. Two weeks before the advertised date, Sarah was minus a voice and was again afflicted with her old nervousness. Isabella in *The Fatal Marriage* was her rôle, and when the curtain rose she soon displayed her powers. The sweet tones of her voice melted men into tears, and her tragic acting threw women into hysterics. She had at length triumphed, and the theatre-goers of London were at her feet. 'When I reached my own fireside,' she thus graphically writes, 'from that scene of reiterated shouts and applause, I was half dead; and my joy and thankfulness were of too solemn and overpowering a nature to admit of words, or even tears.'

The first night was a prelude of what followed. Fox and Sheridan might have been seen weeping in their seats; and when great men weep, what of those who are not accounted great? The engagement brought her fifteen hundred pounds. Next year she received two thousand pounds, and her two benefits each amounted to fourteen hundred and fifty pounds.

Her second visit to Edinburgh was a remarkable one; two thousand five hundred and fifty-seven applied for seats in a theatre which could only accommodate six hundred and fifty persons; and it was quite common for footmen to retake on the same night the places newly vacated by their masters. Audiences are fickle, for when Sarah Siddons first visited Modern Athens she was very coldly received; the only praise she got was from a man in the gallery, who called out to the actress at the end of one of her best parts, 'That's no sae bad.' Our readers may not be aware of the strange coincidence which marked the second visit. While the actress was representing the heroine (Isabella) where she calls out, 'My Biron! my Biron!' a lady was seized with hysterics and had to be removed. The unfortunate lady was Miss Gordon of Gight, afterwards the mother of Lord Byron.

Sarah Siddons took her leave of the public on the 29th of June 1812, in her great character of Lady Macbeth. She never acted better; and when the sleep-walking scene was finished, the audience demanded that the play should terminate, this being in those days the highest form of showing approval. Subsequently, she occasionally consented to reappear on the stage for charitable ends.

Another remarkable theatrical success was that of the boy Henry West Betty. Born of Irish parents in the year 1791 at Shrewsbury, he very early displayed histrionic powers. His parents wisely resolved to cultivate these latent possibilities; they took him first to hear Sarah Siddons, then acting at Dublin; thereafter, they entrusted him to the Dublin manager, and he in turn handed him to his prompter, Hough, who saw in the boy a something which he thought would yet do credit to his instructor. He therefore set about training Betty, who made his début at Belfast in the year 1803. The boy was only twelve years of age, yet he played the parts of Rollo, Douglas, Romeo, and Hamlet; and so popular did he become, that although it was the days of the United Irishmen, when it behoved every one in Belfast to be within doors by nine o'clock p.m., special permission was given to theatre-goers returning from Betty's performance.

From Belfast he crossed over to Scotland, and made his first appearance in Edinburgh. Jackson, his employer, left no plan untried to herald the youthful Roscius's fame. *Douglas* was the first play acted. Home, its author, was present, and declared he had never before seen it done so well. Glasgow received Betty with open arms; and so intense was the popular regard for him, that a journalist who ventured to criticise the 'idol' had to flee the city.

Macready, father of the great William, engaged Betty for his theatre in Birmingham; the sum guaranteed was ten pounds per night, plus his benefits. When the youthful actor made himself known to Macready, the latter was so disappointed that he wished to cancel the engagement. Betty was agreeable, and only asked that his expenses to Edinburgh might be paid; however, Macready repented, and promised to remunerate according to the success of the venture. The engagement proved remunerative, for Betty received on an average sixty pounds per night.

The proprietors of Drury Lane wished to engage him, but they were of opinion that fifty pounds per night was an exorbitant demand, and so refused to employ him. What Drury Lane would not do, Covent Garden did, and the speculation proved a literal mine of wealth. During the summer, Betty visited the provinces; at Liverpool he cleared fifteen hundred and twenty pounds, and so great was the demand for seats, that crowds of all sexes might have been seen standing at the box-office at seven o'clock in the morning!

In the winter, he returned to London; and his popularity was greater than ever. The street in which Covent Garden Theatre stands was lined with soldiers; and so great was the crowd, that Drury Lane, from the overflow of its neighbourhood, drew three hundred pounds, and this in the afternoon. The play was one of *Voltaire's*, and Betty had to appear as *Achmet*, the boy-slave. Mrs *Inchbald* was one of the audience, and in her eyes the actor made a sorry appearance; indeed, she regarded the whole affair as the offspring of a popular whim. But her criticism stood for little, because was not the popular fancy tickled? Public taste is very erratic, for while Betty was drawing crowds, *Kemble* and *Mrs Siddons*, *Cooke* and *Mrs Gordon*, were acting to empty benches. But the 'feeling' had never on any other occasion run so high; *Bonaparte* was entirely forgotten; and the aristocracy vied with each other in having the company of the Irish boy. Pitt on one occasion moved the adjournment of the House of Commons in order that the members might see Betty act in a certain part. When the actor suddenly took ill, bulletins were issued at intervals; and after he reached the stage of convalescence, *Charles James Fox* read by his bedside.

Three nights a week he was at Covent Garden, and on the off-nights he acted in Drury Lane. For his first three appearances he received fifty pounds; and for the remaining five, one hundred pounds, besides benefits, each of which was worth one thousand pounds. The total receipts for the twenty-eight nights at Covent Garden amounted to seventeen thousand two hundred and ten pounds; the average nightly drawing was six

hundred and fourteen pounds; the largest ever reached was seven hundred and fifty-two.

The following autumn saw Betty again in London; but the spell was broken. Worth once more became an element in shaping public opinion; and it was needed. A picture of that period represents *Kemble* and Betty riding on the same horse; the latter, of course, is first, and the following words are put into his mouth: 'I don't mean to affront you; but when two persons ride on a horse, one must ride behind.' When the craze passed away, *Kemble* resumed his rightful place in the public mind. The provinces clung to Betty for a time; but they, too, tired of novelty. He was soon neglected; and in consequence he quitted the stage, and at the age of fifteen enrolled himself as a student at Cambridge with a view to the Church. But his first love was too strong, and he returned to the stage, continuing to act with indifferent success until his death at Southport in the year 1824.

The last of the quartette is *Edmund Kean*. The miseries he endured in the early part of his professional career seem almost too great for any man to have weathered. He married rashly, and the step did not lighten his sorrows. In the midst of such adverse circumstances, *Kean* always believed he was a born genius, and destined to receive the adulation of his fellows. His first engagement was at a theatre in *Teignmouth*, but the pittance he received was barely sufficient to procure for himself, wife, and child the necessities of life. But while fulfilling this engagement, he attracted the attention of *Dr Drury*, who strongly recommended *Kean* to the proprietors of Drury Lane. One of their number was despatched to *Teignmouth* to witness *Kean's* acting and report upon the result. In consequence of this visit the ambitious actor was engaged for three years at nine pounds per week—a large sum for one who before could hardly keep starvation from his door. *Kean* repaired to London; but three months had to elapse before he could get into harness; during this time he had only eight pounds to keep himself and family. The privations they endured must have been terrible. For one hundred and thirty nights Drury Lane had been far below its average drawings, and the directors resolved to infuse new spirit into their company. They turned to *Kean*, and proposed that he should play the part of *Richard III.*; this *Kean* refused to do, saying, 'Shylock or nothing.' *Expostulation* was useless, and the directors submitted; success, they thought, was now hopeless.

On the 26th of January 1814 *Kean* made his first appearance at Drury Lane; for him it was an anxious time, for he was as yet an unknown man. His fellow-actors treated him with studied coolness, and until the morning of that eventful night no rehearsal was given him. When the rehearsal was finished, the general talk was regarding the certainty of *Kean's* failure, and even the manager, in petulant disgust, said it would never do. That day he resolved to dine! By some means his wife obtained for him steak and a pint of porter. To him this was indeed a feast. He felt conscious of his near triumph; and when he left home with a wig and a pair of black silk stockings in his hand, he said to his wife: 'My God, I shall go mad!' The



night was unfavourable, for the London streets were covered with two feet of snow. The play went on, and Kean displayed his great abilities. 'Hath not a Jew eyes?' was received with rounds of applause; and 'My principal!' was well rendered. But it was in the withering look of scorn with which he received the taunts of Gratiano that the audience saw the might of a genius. The motion of eye, lip, and muscle which Kean displayed had never been seen since the days of Garrick. And Fanny Kemble wrote that she would never forget his dying eyes in Richard III.

From that night Kean's triumph was complete. But his nature was very passionate; he could dine with Byron and the best of London society and thereafter be the chairman at a pugilistic supper. Excess told upon his frame; and when the time for bidding farewell to the stage came, he was unequal to it. He last acted as Othello to the Iago of his son Charles; and when he came to the words, 'Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone!' he sank back into his son's arms, saying, 'I am dying; speak to the audience for me.' So ended this brilliant career. Its noonday was very bright and fair; but the clouds of sunset hid the beauty we would have desired to see.

#### LION-HUNTING IN ALGERIA.

NORTH AFRICA, the seat of the once mighty empire of Carthage—the resting-place of the Vandals and cradle of the Moors—remains a *terra incognita* to the rank and file of the great army of modern travellers. Quaint notions still prevail as to the fauna of that vast expanse of country stretching northward from the Sahara to the shores of the Mediterranean. It is to most people a fabulous region, teeming with gigantic forms of animal life, where elephants and lions, the rhinoceros and giraffe, are believed to abound. But most of this is pure fiction, founded to some small extent on ancient history. In the remote past, elephants seem to have flourished in Morocco. Strabo describes them as existing there; but the fact nowadays is, that throughout all Tripoli, Tunis, Algeria, Morocco, and the great belt of desert on the south, no trace of wild elephants is to be found. The rhinoceros and giraffe are likewise conspicuous by their absence. Nevertheless, public opinion exacts from every African traveller a thrilling recital of the way in which these mighty denizens of the wilderness are laid low.

At the risk of being regarded as prosaic, we will be truthful and eschew all fiction. We have encountered no wild elephants; the giraffe and rhinoceros are strangers to us, beyond seeing them in captivity. The larger beasts of prey met by us with anything like frequency were only hyenas and jackals. The hyena, so called by the Greeks from its swine-like appearance, is that bristly-maned, dog-like animal frequently seen in menageries, of which we once heard the showman say: 'This is the savage hyena; he prowls about graveyards at night; he

digs up the corpses and eats them alive.' As to the jackal, he is but a wild gregarious sort of dog. When seen at menageries, half mad with hunger, or stirred up by the long pole of the keeper into fits of impotent ferocity, growling and snarling at you and at each other over the scanty meal of bones flung to them—these noxious creatures may have produced in some of us the pleasant sensation of being terrified in perfect safety. No doubt, many a visitor has come away from such shows firmly convinced that hyenas and jackals are animals of the most dangerous description; ugly customers to meet outside their iron cages. Such notions will be quickly dispelled by a holiday tour through Algeria. Moors or Arabs mind them no more than we do rats. Hyenas and jackals are to the aborigines of North Africa mere vermin, and, as such, not objects of fear, but only of loathing and contempt. No Kabyle would demean himself by stalking the like. His long gun, scimitar, or yataghan is much too good for them. They are fit only for his cudgel, and with it he slays them indiscriminately whenever they cross his path. In the eyes of the European sportsman they soon become more contemptible even than the rat, for it is a plucky animal, and will sometimes turn upon its foe and die game; but the jackal never. Even when wounded, or with their young, their only resource is to sneak away ignominiously. In short, master jackal is an arrant coward and humbug, known as such by every child in Algeria. Nor can it be said of the more powerful hyena that he is much braver. We have seen a mere lad with a stick chase them by day; and even at night, when they pluck up courage and come forth from their hiding-places in large numbers to ply their loathsome task as scavengers of the desert, an encounter with them is deemed by no means formidable. Only the most verdant novice, freshly imported from Europe, would bring a breech-loader to bear upon them.

Where, then, in broad Algeria, may the brave son of Nimrod find game worthy of his trusted rifle and of his keen and practised eye, which have been the death of many a hare and wildfowl on the moors of merry England and Wales and bonnie Scotland? If he is *sans peur et sans reproche*, and, moreover, patient, much-enduring—and with plenty of time at his disposal—we can promise him the grandest and noblest sport of all. The king of beasts in his finest development is still to be found in North Africa. Among the mimosa bushes of yonder sandy plains he rears his majestic crest. Those rocky heights know his presence. From boulder to boulder he leaps with mighty bounds, and at night his awful voice re-echoes, rolling like thunder along the ground, and cowering all nature into silence. No other North African country contains so many lions as Algeria; but even there they are growing scarcer from year to year. Gérard, the first famous Algerian lion-killer, upwards of thirty years ago estimated them as only one hundred and twenty in number, and they have certainly not increased since. A successful lion-hunt has thus become one of the rarest of rare events. We have known many fashionable *chasses-au-lion* to be organised. No stranger of note who visits the country can well leave it without indulging in one or more of them. They are a picturesque but costly kind of

pageantry, always shown off in broad daylight, and forsooth on horseback. Small matter to these amateur sportsmen that lions habitually sleep by day in their almost inaccessible mountain fastnesses, and that the proximity of a large posse of men and horses intimidates them. The native guides know well what they are about. A lion-hunt has been ordered regardless of expense, and vast preparations are set on foot forthwith.

At dawn of the appointed day, a glittering cavalcade issues from the gates. It is hailed by the acclamation of a motley crowd of natives eager for backsheesh, whose expectations are abundantly gratified, owing to the best of humours engendered by the prospect of such noble sport. A truly magnificent display is made of horses, harness, and picturesque costumes. Breech-loading rifles, revolvers, spears, and yataghans reflect the bright rays of the morning sun; and thus, with much shouting, clanking, and jingling, the grand hunt proceeds. Much show, but little wool, for nothing ever comes of it. All day long, through field, sandy plain, and forest, the king of beasts is sought, and never found. Some spicy little bit of excitement or other has been pre-arranged by the guides, who feel that something must be done for the money. A turbaned Arab suddenly appears on the outskirts of a thicket, vowing that a lion is there. With much show of courage, the thicket is entered by the guides, leading what seems a forlorn-hope; and the uninitiated follow boldly. Every bush is searched, but no! His royal majesty is not at home. His lair is indeed pointed out, and declared to be still warm with unmistakable signs of recent occupancy—but that is about all; unless some one in the fervour of his enthusiasm should fancy that he has got sight of the lion, of his tawny mane, his tufted tail, or glittering eyes. In that case, a rifle, perhaps several, are discharged; and though no carcass is ever found, the ready-witted natives are at no loss to account for that: it has tumbled into some inaccessible ravine, and there it lies. Lies, indeed! And so the grand hunt comes to an end before nightfall. A triumphal return and sumptuous feast crown the glorious achievements of the day. In fact, the thing is a sham from beginning to end.

Real lion-hunts present widely different features. Free from all ostentatious display, they are spiced with much difficulty, exertion, and danger, and only on rare occasions unqualified success is reaped. Perhaps the most impressive of them is, when a whole tribe of Arabs in sheer self-defence issue forth to a man, determined to put an end to the ravagers of their flocks and herds or die in the attempt. It is indeed a question of life or death for the Arab. The amount of damage done to the herds of a tribe by a single family of lions in a month has been estimated at ten per cent., and remember, his herd is the Arab's *all*.

We were on a visit to one of the hill-tribes when such an emergency arose. Our hosts were poor, but to the best they could offer we were made heartily welcome. There is no lack of hospitality among the much-maligned Ishmaelites. Many an act of genuine kindness was shown us, and we should have been cravens indeed had we refused to aid our dusky friends in their hour of need. A lion family had taken up their abode in a cave difficult of access, among the hills close

by. Night after night dire havoc was wrought by these fierce marauders, and the time had come when a determined stand must be made to avert utter and irrevocable ruin. While the mountain Arab is by no means deficient in courage, perseverance, or physical strength, his weapons are of a most primitive kind. The long light flint-lock gun he handles bears no comparison with our modern arms of precision. Deprived of that comfortable sense of safety and self-assurance which the possession of a trusty breech-loader affords, the Arab endeavours to make up for it by an accumulation of numbers. It can scarcely be said, however, that the old proverb holds good on such occasions. Face to face with an angry North African lion, there is no safety in numbers; he has been known to rush upon hundreds of men.

A glorious morning it was among the hills; the sky all aglow with purple tints; and through the veil of mist which hung round the shoulder of the great granite heights far off, the summits were glistening like so many black diamonds bathed in sunbeams. Nature in its most rugged form lay before and around us. In the pure azure above, moon and stars were paling before the sun's return. We were surrounded by a motley crowd of Arabs in their picturesque costume. Young and old, all indeed capable of bearing arms had turned out; some few were handling their long, slender, smooth-bore guns, but by far the greater number had only spears and yataghans. The venerable chief beside us gave his orders briefly but distinctly. The exact location of the lion's cave was well known. At imminent peril of their lives, the scouts had found it, tracking its mighty denizens to their very lair. A large circle of spearmen was now formed, and the men received instructions to converge gradually towards a rocky ledge in front of the cave, whose entrance was faintly visible from the elevated position of our trysting-place. Presently the 'battue' commenced. Amid much shouting and clash of arms, the lines were drawn closer and closer, while all of us who had firearms made as straight as possible for the cave. Before we had got within range, an enormous male lion showed himself for an instant, shook his mane and vanished, to appear again when we had arrived at a distance of about a thousand yards.

A brisk but harmless fusilade was opened upon him by our Arab friends, and with a roar of defiance he withdrew once more into his stronghold; nor did he show himself again as we drew nearer and nearer, until we came to a halt about two hundred yards from the cave. The narrow ledge leading up to it was separated from the hillside on which we stood by a deep gorge more than forty feet wide. Above the ledge towered a precipitous height; and every cleft or gully in the rocky wall around bristled with the arms of our spearmen, barring escape in every direction, a complete circle of glittering steel. We looked carefully to our weapons, and, when all was ready for giving our royal foes a hot reception, loud shouts and clamour were raised to draw them forth; but all in vain. No lion showed as much as the tip of his nose. After brief consultation, one dauntless youth volunteered to creep along the ledge, close to the cave, collect a heap of dry brushwood and fire it, so as to smoke the lions out. The spearmen redoubled their clamour, and

we held our rifles in readiness for instant use, while anxiously watching the lad's progress. He pursued his perilous task with great courage. Creeping warily along the ledge, he never paused till he had gained the entrance of the cave. Quickly gathering together the dry brushwood near at hand, he soon raised a pile large enough to fill the entrance; and after firing it, he made his way back in safety, proud of his daring achievement, and warmly greeted by us all. A few moments and the fire blazed up, sending a column of smoke into the cave. The effect upon the inmates was instantaneous and startling. Two mighty roars mingled in one, and lion and lioness bounded forth one after the other. Our doings had goaded them into fury, and they were ready to do battle against all odds in defence of their young ones and their home. At first glimpse of them my companion and I fired; but the movements of the mighty beasts were so rapid and incessant that both of us missed. Our Arab friends were peppering away with their firelocks, but also to little or no purpose.

Suddenly, while the lioness charged down upon us along the ledge, her consort, with one mighty bound, cleared the gully, alighting in the very midst of the Arabs at its brink, and, for the moment, carrying all before him. We aimed carefully this time as the lioness sprang upon us, and both our bullets took effect; but it needed a second dose of lead out of our breech-loaders to stretch her lifeless at our feet. We then hastened to the assistance of our allies. What a scene met our eyes! Bleeding profusely from many wounds, but as yet far from disabled, the furious male was making sad havoc among the crowd. Cracking a skull there with one mighty sweep of his paw, and smashing a shoulder with another, he had already strewn the ground with slain and wounded, as we drew nigh to finish him with our rifles. At that very moment the spearmen were likewise upon him. While he was scattering his assailants in front, more and more men had drawn near from behind, and half-a-dozen lances were now plunged into him simultaneously, bearing him to the ground at last. The short but fierce struggle was over. Our terrible antagonist lay breathing his last, with his victims around him. He had killed five Arabs outright, and wounded fourteen more, among whom, to our great regret, was the young hero of the day, the same brave lad whose perilous exploit we had admired so much. A great broad gash from neck to shoulder will henceforth bear witness to his prowess in the eyes of the whole tribe.

We were publicly thanked by the chief for our modest share in the glory of the day, and he informed us later on that he deemed victory cheap at the price, considering that thirty or forty victims often fall in such encounters. Two young cubs, scarcely six months old, were found inside the cave half smothered by the smoke. We afterwards learnt that they had been sent to Algiers for sale, and, for all we know, they may now be inmates of some zoological garden or menagerie. Our work was accomplished. Probably for many years to come the tribe would be exempt from similar infliction. With high hearts we held our triumphal entry into the village, amid shouts of victory blended with death-wails, and with lamentations

over the many wounded. Our young hero of the fire met with his reward. They carried him along in triumph, and, as he lay on his roughly improvised couch, faint from loss of blood, but elated with the consciousness of his achievement, no mortal could have been happier than he. The whole tribe, young and old, paid grateful homage to him as he lay there, for 'honour to whom honour is due' remains the rule with these unsophisticated sons of the wilderness, and long may it continue so.

Such, then, has been our experience of lion-hunting in North Africa. Furnished with the best arms of precision, and well supported by the indomitable pluck and ripe experience of our dusky allies, we had found ourselves face to face with the king of beasts, and, after all, had but little right to boast of our encounter with him.

#### AN ATLANTIC EXPERIENCE.

A WILD night in mid-Atlantic, with a gale of wind, and the old *Octavia* staggering along before it, with her lower topsails and reefed foresail set. Now, slowly climbing up the hill, then a slight pause on the crest before she dived down into the dark abyss between the waves, and every now and again a great sea would catch her under the quarter, making her old timbers creak and groan as if they were in agony. Two hands at the wheel grinding away, hard up and hard down, trying to keep the old tub as straight as possible. Sometimes she would come up and a green sea would dash over the weather rail and across to leeward, making the deck-load strain and tug at its lashings as if it longed to get loose and join the foam-capped waves in their mad gambols.

It was the month of July, and the barque *Octavia*, from Quebec to Sunderland with timber, was reaping the full benefit of a westerly gale, which had sprung up the night before. There are much more comfortable places than the deck of a timber *droguer* in bad weather, and such was the opinion of the watch on deck, who were clustered round the windmill pump, just under the break of the poop, earnestly wishing for eight bells, when they would divest themselves of dripping oilskins and big sea-boots and enjoy the comforts of a dry fo'c'sle.

Just after a heavier sea than usual had broken over us, which made us hang on like grim death to the life-lines which were rigged across the deck, the second-mate sang out: 'Lay along here, lads, and get a lashing on these boats;' and we tumbled aft, growling as only sailors can. We carried three—one the gig in the davits on the port quarter; the two others on top of the deckhouse forward. We commenced putting the extra lashings on the quarter-boat first, and an awkward job it was, holding on with one hand, and passing the rope round the boat with the other, while the ship rolled about and staggered like a drunken man, which made it difficult for the best sailor to keep his feet, while every now and then a blinding spray would dash up into our faces and fly all over the poop, covering us all with sparkling drops of salt water, that glittered like diamonds whenever the sun, with a struggle, peeped through the heavy clouds that were flying over the skies. We finished the job, however,

without any mishap, except that Magnus the Shetlander dived head foremost into the dog-kennel, to the intense disgust of Flora, the big Newfoundland.

Having securely lashed the after-boat, we made our way forward to do the same to the others, accompanied by Flora, who never seemed to think a piece of work properly done unless executed under her own superintendence. We had got into the waist, when a warning shout of 'Look out there, boys!' from the wheel made us look up, to see a huge sea just rising on the weather-side and threatening to overwhelm us. A tremendous rush for the fore-rigging ensued, ropes and handspikes being dropped and abandoned to their fate. I, being a young sailor at the time, and not fully aware of the enormous power of an Atlantic wave, sprang on top of the hencoop just abaft the house. I had scarcely got up, when, with an awful crash, the sea broke over us, and I was swept away to leeward amidst the wreck of the hencoop, covered with water, and all afloat. I thought I was overboard, and remembered that we had just lashed the only boat that could have been lowered, although no boat could have lived in such a sea. The next thing I felt was something holding me by the legs; and when the water cleared away, I found myself half over the side, but my legs jammed by the last log of the deck cargo, which had got loose, the wedges being washed out, and the lee bulwark cut off by the deck. Waiting for the next weather-roll, I scrambled up as best I could, and made my way to the fore-rigging, in which the second-mate and the rest of the watch on deck had taken refuge. I was helped up by the men, who were very much surprised to see me, every one thinking I had been swept overboard, like poor Flora, who was seen struggling in the waves astern.

The old barque had broached-to just as the sea topped, and her decks were left in a complete state of wreck, the deck cargo loose, and knocking about with every roll. The hencoop on which I had climbed had been carried overboard. The boats on top of the house had saved us the trouble of putting extra lashings on by disappearing altogether except a few splinters on the lee-side of the house. The lee bulwarks had been carried away, and the weather-side of the deckhouse stove in. The *Octavia*, as usual in timber ships, had no fore-castle in the bows, and the crew lived in the forward end of the deckhouse. The whole of the watch below had been washed out of their bunks, and were flying about the deck in their shirts, half awake, and adding not a little to the general confusion. The rest of the crew immediately set to work to put things to rights; while I, feeling my legs very painful, made my way to the galley, where the cook was at his wits' end, having lost all his pots and pans except one large kettle, which had been washed into the coal locker and escaped the fate of the others. In a few hours we were all to rights again, the cargo wedged off, a spare topsail nailed over the side of the house, and a life-line rigged along the lee gunwale. I was laid up for a day or two, as my legs were much bruised and swollen, but I was soon able to be about again. I have been in several scrapes at sea since that time; but I have never forgotten my first narrow escape from drowning.

# GRANDMOTHER'S VALENTINE.

ST VALENTINE'S DAY dawned bright and fair,  
And 'twas nine by the great hall clock  
When we gathered about dear Granny's chair,  
Awaiting the postman's knock.  
It came at last with a rat-tat-tat  
That resounded through the place,  
And startled Grandmother where she sat  
With a smile on her fair old face.

Then eager hands were outstretched to take  
The missives that youth holds dear,  
And her silver head gave a warning shake,  
As she heard the laughter clear  
That rose and fell, and broke out anew  
'Mid questions of 'yours' and 'mine,'  
Till one cried: 'Granny, a letter for you—  
It must be a Valentine!'

Grandmother, knowing her young folks well,  
Suspected some girlish plot,  
But opened her letter, and from it fell  
A spray of forget-me-not—  
A slender spray, which had once been blue  
As the tints of the summer sky,  
But was faded now, and of palest hue,  
Like a relic of days gone by.

Our eyes grew dim with a sudden mist  
That melted in tender showers,  
When our youngest and dearest stooped and kissed  
The hand that fondled the flowers.  
Grandmother smiled; but we saw the tears  
On her soft gray lashes shine,  
As she said: 'Nay, do not trouble, dears;  
'Tis a precious Valentine.

'Some gentle fingers gathered this spray,  
Under last summer's skies,  
From a grave in a churchyard far away  
Where my heart's best treasure lies.  
It has been carefully pressed, you see,  
And kept through the winter hours,  
Then sent like a message of love to me,  
This delicate spray of flowers.'

But Grandmother spent that day alone;  
And we guessed the tender truth,  
That the grave where the little flowers had grown  
Held the husband of her youth.  
For when we bade her a fond good-night,  
With pathos that seemed divine  
She laid 'neath the folds of her pillow white  
That strange, sweet Valentine.

Ah well! She died when the spring was new,  
And we laid her down to rest  
Where fragile blossoms of tender blue  
Would nestle above her breast:  
But we knew her love had lived through grief,  
In Memory's greenest spot,  
When we found on her Bible's well-worn leaf  
That spray of forget-me-not!

E. MATHESON.

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